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being frankly set forth. If it was true that our nation could not continue to exist half slave and half free it is equally true that modern society cannot continue to exist with a régime of freedom and equality in political rights and a régime of subordination and arbitrary management in the realm of industry.

The sympathies of Christian leaders are with the growing movements of industrial democracy. But, as we have seen, our habits of religious thinking are inherited from an age when autocracy

was accepted as the rule of life. If Christianity is to be a genuine inspirer of democracy it must interpret life in terms of democratic processes rather than in terms of regulations imposed from overhead. The rapidity and the hearty good-will with which this is being undertaken are encouraging. But before the religious message of the church is thoroughly democratic certain emphases must become more pronounced. Some of these emphases we shall consider in a concluding article.

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## CATHOLIC MODERNISM AND CATHOLIC DOGMA

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Although the movement in the Roman Catholic church known as Modernism received its name in a Papal Encyclical of 1907, and officially perished with the issue of a Papal *Motu Proprio* of 1910, it can by no means be historically confined within these dates. The tendencies to which it gave tangible expression are in fact increasingly discernible in Roman Catholicism from the era of the French Revolution. It would be a mistaken description of Modernism that would connect it with twelfth- or sixteenth-century radicals like Abelard or Giordano Bruno. Such individualists are nearer to the spirit of liberal Protestantism, with its indifference to the idea of a Catholic church. The Modernists are essentially Catholic, and it is in the

name and spirit of Catholicism that they challenge the papacy. They are also essentially modern, as is shown in their respect for science, in their historic criticism, and in their democratic principles.

### **The Genesis of Modernism**

The Modernist spirit derives in some degree from the democratic revival of the French Revolution era. Revolution sentiment powerfully affected the church in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Early French Ultramontanism was possessed of the exhilarating hope of a democratized Catholicism. This liberal or modernizing tendency was represented by influential personalities like Montalembert and Lamennais. The latter, once a

strong candidate for a cardinalate, subsequently left the church for the sake of greater intellectual freedom. The reactionism of Pius IX (1846-78), especially the Roman Decrees of 1854 and the Vatican Council of 1870, depressed and discouraged, but did not extirpate, Catholic liberalism.

Among opponents of the reactionary papal tendency two men outside of France stand out with great prominence. Neither Newman nor Döllinger was invited to attend the Vatican Council. Both were distressed by the Vatican decrees, but each met the new situation in his own way. Döllinger refused to submit to the new claims and became the leader of a homeless sect which he hoped would form the rallying-ground for the institution of a true Catholicism. In so doing he was no Modernist. The Old Catholic movement which he re-organized was more an effort to revert to patristic models than one to meet changing world-conditions.

Newman, on the other hand, who had sought the Roman church as a harbor for his soul, was not to be set adrift again even by painful disillusionment. He swallowed the new dogmas as best he could and remained a loyal though not unsuspected Catholic. At the same time he held to opinions on the development of dogma and on the subject of authority which were quite out of tune with the tendencies of the increasingly reactionary and autocratic papacy. George Tyrrell, in his spirited reply to Cardinal Mercier (*Mediaevalism*, p. 95), while applauding the courage and single-mindedness of Döllinger, assures his opponent that he was "less of a Modernist than Newman."

But Newman was never more than a beginner in the field of criticism. As the criticism of the Bible and of ecclesiastical history developed in the course of the century, it was inevitable that the Roman church would sooner or later face the theological problems which criticism raised. One of the foremost Catholic historians of the period, Louis Duchesne, became professor of church history in the Catholic Institute at Paris in the year of the death of Pius IX (1878). A sincere critical historian, he gave to Catholic students interpretations of church development that were truthful and surprising. Alfred Loisy, a pupil of Duchesne, joined the staff of the Institute in 1881 as professor of Hebrew. During a fruitful professorship of twelve years Loisy carried the critical methods of history into his lectures on Bible subjects. In 1893 he was forced to resign, and the Pope's Encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* condemned higher criticism, stating that the canonical books were inspired in such a way as to "exclude all error."

But the position of Leo XIII on advanced thought within the church was compromised by the fact that he had been induced to lend his favor to the "Union pour l'action morale," a group which proposed radical social reforms and embraced others than Catholics within its membership. Leo never committed himself to stringent policies of repression. While he disciplined or deprived individual teachers, encouraged in his Encyclical *Aeterni Patris* the revival of scholastic philosophy, and wrote to Cardinal Gibbons deploring free tendencies in America,

yet he never set about a general program for the extirpation of Modernism.

### **Development and Suppression of Modernism**

The pontificate of Pius X (1903-14) marks the rapid development and the official suppression of Modernism. "The Unknown Pope," as he was called at the time of his election, soon became known as a determined reactionary. Loisy's chief works were immediately placed on the Index; and the same fate befell the mass of Modernist writings which now appeared in rapid succession. Laberthonnière, Hutin, and Le Roy in France, Tyrrell and von Hügel in England, Schell and Schnitzer in Germany, and an Italian group headed by Fogazzaro the novelist and Dom Romolo Murri, toward whom the Pope is said to have cherished an early personal antipathy, became, with Loisy, the marked objects of the papal counter-attack. The Decree *Lamentabili* of July, 1907, listed 65 heresies of the new school. It was followed in September of that year by the now historic Encyclical *Pascendi Domini gregis*, in which the name "Modernist," already in use among Jesuit writers, was attached to the movement as a badge of dishonor. The document is astutely argumentative, but it prescribes other means than argument to secure the overthrow of the movement—censorship, vigilance committees, espionage, and all the paraphernalia of bloodless repression.

Courageous and able protests were made against the Encyclical, notably by Tyrrell, whose reply took the form of a letter to the *London Times*. *The Programme of Modernism* was the remon-

strance of an anonymous group; the Italian original was soon translated into English by Tyrrell.

As the Encyclical had only aroused instead of silencing the Modernist leaders, severer treatment was now to be accorded them. The papacy took advantage of the avowed refusal of the Modernists to participate in a schism. Even those who like Loisy and Murri had been excommunicated were still professing their loyalty to the church. This unconditional fidelity could be traded upon. The demand was now presented, in the *Motu Proprio, Sacrorum antistitum*, that an oath disavowing Modernist views and promising to support the Encyclical and other anti-Modernist measures should be taken by all professors and ordinands. The oath was taken, with few exceptions. But many Modernists declared in making their submission that the act was merely formal and morally invalid. At the same time the allied Christian Social movement of France, with the *Sillon* as its organ, was suppressed (1910).

### **The Philosophy of Modernism**

Although Modernism arose, as its leaders repeatedly insist, not out of philosophical speculation but out of historical criticism, still it may be said to possess a set of philosophical principles which are characteristic of the whole movement. In the Encyclical these principles are adversely stated to be founded on agnosticism. This word is inaccurately used to describe the Modernist revolt against external views of revelation and the assured intellectualism of the Angelic Doctor.

The leading philosopher of Modernism is Lucien Laberthonnière. He drew his ideas partly from M. Blondel, who in the nineties advocated an apologetic based on immanence. Laberthonnière brings a new perspective to the old problem of reality. He dissociates himself both from sensationalists and from idealists. He criticizes both the agnostics who regard reality as beyond knowledge, and the intellectual dogmatists who import, into the phenomenal, ideas to which they give ontological value. Sensation and thought are not separately capable of bringing us to reality. The knowledge of reality involves a moral activity to which sensation and thought are alike ancillary. Life does not passively receive truth; it actively constitutes it. Through the moral will man obtains the certainty of God. But this is possible, not because God is apart from man, but because he is in man. Laberthonnière protects his doctrine of immanence against pantheism. God is the inspirer, and God is the prize of life—the end toward which human endeavor tends. God has reality without man as well as in man. "Just as we affirm ourselves freely by Him, so He by us freely affirms Himself; yet with this difference, that we if we willed to affirm ourselves without Him would lose ourselves, while He could affirm Himself without us and yet lose nothing of the fulness of His being." Thus the affirmation of reality becomes a moral act; and every such act has a moral value proportional to the indwelling in the human agent of the immanent God. Truth therefore is never a static quantity but always dynamic and relative. Each truth affirmed, being vitally related to

life itself, becomes a starting-point for new moral ventures, each harvest of truth but seed for a new sowing.

*The Programme of Modernism* is anxious to refute the charge of agnosticism. Spencer's conception of the Unknowable is repudiated by the Modernists. The view of knowledge as a function of activity, a view derived from the results of science and psychology, breaks down "the fictitious barriers between thought and will" of scholastic philosophy and really results in vastly extending the area of the Knowable. There exist in the human spirit other powers than the argumentative reason, and powers no less reliable for attaining truth. The writers deny the novelty of their principle of vital immanence, traced in the Encyclical to modern Protestant thought. They cite Newman, Augustine, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and use the words of Aquinas himself that "a natural desire can never be a delusion." Even the Vatican definitions cited in the Encyclical in condemnation of Modernism are shown to bear the interpretation of immanence.

Immanentism leads the Modernists to an altogether untraditional respect for the non-Christian religions, and accordingly they are charged in the Encyclical with admitting that "all religions are true." The position really taken is that the ethnic faiths are relatively beneficial, as representing a moral advance on the environment in which they arose. Their relation to Christianity is that of the less perfect to the more perfect. Arguments are freely drawn from the fathers of the Logos theology in support of the Modernist contention. Did not Justin

recognize the truth of the Stoic doctrine of the Logos Spermatikos, and so regard as Christians those who in former times lived according to the Logos, like Socrates, Heraclitus, and Abraham?

### The Evolution of Dogma

The Modernists have closely observed the history of the formulation of the dogmas of the church, applying to the subject the methods and hypotheses of genetic historical study. To them dogma has no aspect of finality, but rather the aspect of continuous evolution, reflecting the evolving forms of life itself. Loisy, the keenest of the Modernist biblical critics, has perhaps most clearly expressed this conception. In *Autour d'un Petit Livre*, a sheaf of letters to French churchmen in defense of positions taken in his former work, *L'Évangile et l'Église*, he traces the evolution of Christology from the resurrection to Chalcedon (pp. 119-29). That Christology was not explicitly, formally, and authoritatively taught (p. 156) but progressively wrought out in theological travail. The actual consciousness of Jesus largely escapes the historian. Tradition plays a decisive part in the formulation of his teaching in the New Testament as well as in the Fathers. The Christology develops from the Jewish messianic conception, with its underlying ideas of predestination and of the unique part of the Messiah. But "le Christ historique, dans l'humanité de son 'service' est assez grand pour justifier la Christologie, et la Christologie n'est pas besoin d'avoir été enseignée expressement par Jésus pour être vraie."

Modernism is careful to repudiate all connection with liberal *Protestantism*

in asserting these positions. Indeed Loisy's *Évangile* is a rather severe critique of Harnack's *Das Wesen des Christentums*. He criticizes Harnack for taking a portion of the reported teaching of Jesus and making it absolute, while it is really to be regarded as all traditional and relative. The Modernists do not seek a new basis for dogma by discriminating in detail between genuine and interpolated elements in the teaching ascribed to Jesus. Instead they would conserve all church dogma but put it all through a process of reinterpretation as an expression of the religious life of the centuries through which it was given form. Tyrrell in *Christianity at the Crossroads* is equally concerned to distinguish between the "liberal" subjective methods and the Modernist conservation of dogmatic values.

On the other hand Modernism rebels against the *Scholastic* domination. Tyrrell is able to show Cardinal Mercier that "history with its revelations of the evolution of Scripture, Hierarchy, and Dogma, has shattered the synthesis of Scholastic theology." The value of dogma is the value of the living facts which it represents, and depends not on the form but on the spirit. Tyrrell makes an example of the Athanasian Creed as follows:

"If in the Athanasian Creed the words, 'This is the Catholic Faith which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved,' referred, as they seem, to the foregoing theological analysis, they would be ridiculous. Their only tolerable sense is, 'This is the analysis of the Catholic Faith, of those facts and truths by which a man must live (or

of that supernatural world in which he must live) if he is to be saved.'" Thus the Modernist sets himself free from the letter of dogma into the spirit of it. The Catholic faith is something superior and antecedent to its expression in dogma. Dogma is implicit in Catholic Christianity and is evolved by it in the course of history. Again he remarks:

"What is characteristically Christian and Catholic in the lives of the greatest saints . . . obtained among the Apostles and first disciples of Christ generations before the said complexities were called into existence."

It seems open to question whether the framers of the Athanasian Creed would be satisfied with such an interpretation of their words. The Fathers of the church in the age of the great creeds were not Modernists, and "high" interpretations of dogma were the rule among them. The framers of creeds as a rule were interested, not in making a synthesis of experience, but in dealing blows at theological opponents. They not infrequently showed a disposition to bind the believer to the letter. It is admittedly a distinct spiritual advantage to free one's self from the letter of an exacting creed while yet deriving a positive value from it, even by the use of a rather fanciful interpretation of history. But there are sure to be those who will gain more by rejecting some elements of dogma outright—elements which history does not show to be naturally formulated group beliefs, but to partake of party spleenfulness. It is not only the form but the spirit of such portions of dogma that is to be criticized.

Still the Modernists are seeking to do for their church an inestimable service.

It is nothing less than to cure it of that disease which Fogazzaro has diagnosed as "the spirit of immobility." And it is because the conception of vital immanence accords so well with the historical view of dogma that Modernism puts the papacy into a panic. It has a doctrine of life by which the historical critique is supported. The decree *Lamentabili* exhibits the hysteria of the Vatican in the insult to historical science contained in No. 39 of its list of Modernist errors. Here the position is condemned that "the opinions concerning the origin of the sacraments with which the fathers of Trent were imbued, and which certainly influenced their dogmatic canons, are very different from those which now rightly obtain among historians who examine into Christianity." Rome shrinks from the historical as well as from the philosophical argument.

### The Function of Dogma

These views on the development of dogma are accompanied by explicit statements regarding its function in religion today. Among the epithets used in the Encyclical *Pascendi* to portray Modernism in fearsome colors for the warning of the faithful is the phrase "the synthesis of all heresies." Yet the Modernists without exception avow their acceptance of the whole body of ecclesiastical dogma and have testified to their sincerity in this by refusing to be driven into schism.

The real grievance is that they understand by dogma something new and strange, something spiritual rather than formal, springing from life and issuing in life. Le Roy in his *Dogme et*

*Critique* has presented the Modernist view of the function of dogma. To Le Roy dogma is not a cage for thought but a practical aid to religious life. It is to be interpreted in no absolute sense but adapted to the needs of life. Many of the terms used in the familiar church dogmas are metaphorical and "inconvertible into concepts." Thus the idea of the personality of God if defined yields anthropomorphism; if undefined it results in agnosticism. But if taken not as absolute truth but as a practical direction for life, the dogma of God's personality enjoins behavior toward God like right behavior toward known persons. Similarly the doctrine of the real presence, while not capable of rationalization, may suggest the attitude of spirit one would take if Christ were visibly present. Thus the primary use of dogma is as a guide to practical conduct.

While it is easy to see how dogma may be so interpreted as to serve the practical uses here suggested, the actual result of such a process is not quite what Le Roy asserts. What has actually been done is not so much to make dogma a guide to the practice of religion as to make the practice of religion a guide to dogma—to explain the undetermined value of dogma by the recognized values of practice. Surely if dogma is to have any religious value it must have some theological value, since it has been formulated as a compendium of accepted theology. Le Roy does not deny it this value but regards it as entirely secondary.

The Anglican Modernist A. L. Lilley describes the Modernist attitude as denying that dogma is the mathematical

sum of truths. Instead Modernism asserts that dogma is "a body of truth fashioned by the soul of truth which inhabits it." It does not concern itself with the defense of dogmas per se but seeks to connect them with religion itself. "Modernism rejects no dogma, but transforms all." Tyrrell emphasizes the religious value of dogma for minds informed by science. They can still find "a mystical Christ, crucified in the Eucharist, in the chalice the sufferings . . . of all God's victims, —of those who in His cause have gone out like Christ as sheep in the midst of wolves."

Other writers, however, give more attention to the function of dogma as a basis for further progress in the discovery of truth. M. Denis, controller of the publication *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, is quoted by Lilley (*Modernism*, p. 28) as lamenting that this view has not been taken in France: "Dogma is a light to lead us on; we have made it a barrier beyond which we dare not go. . . . We have no relations with anything that is vital, neither with science nor with society nor with the state."

The Modernist attitude to dogma is entirely consistent with the democratization of the church. Tyrrell accepts the accusation that Modernists regard authority as resting on "the agreement of individual minds" and contrasts this with the present papal dictatorship. Loisy's *Évangile* was condemned on the ground that "it is calculated seriously to disturb the belief of the faithful in the fundamental dogmas of Catholic teaching." The list of teachings imperiled concludes with "the divine institution of



the Episcopate and of the Sovereign Pontificate." The triumph of Modernism would assuredly spell the doom of the "Sovereign Pontificate," for it would give authority to "the agreement of individual minds."

It is doubtful if the methods taken for the suppression of Modernism have succeeded even in seriously hampering its propaganda. Recent events are calculated to revive radical tendencies in

the church and to bring about a state of mind in which Modernist views will be considered more favorably than was to be expected ten years ago. The Encyclical *Pascendi* deplors the influence of the movement upon the young; to which Tyrrell replies: "If the young are with us we have only to wait. A generation more and the whole world will be with us" (*Mediaevalism*, p. 120).

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## HUMOR IN THE BIBLE

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People do not go to the Bible for amusement. It is not a book of jokes. Very likely many have been so impressed with its gravity that they have gone over its pages without discovering anything in it which savors of wit. It is such a serious book, and is regarded with such reverence, that doubtless some will be shocked by the assertion that it has in it occasional gleams of humor. That, however, is the fact, and does not at all lower its ethical standard. Containing as it does such a great variety of writings, and being a divine-human book, it was inevitable that some of its pages should be lightened by wit. This should not be surprising inasmuch as the faculty of humor is God-given. It is often used against him, but can be employed for his honor and his kingdom. Henry Ward Beecher defended the use of it in the pulpit by saying that wit is the keenest weapon known; and why

should it not be employed for God instead of only for the devil? Jesus himself indulged in wit and irony, as will be later shown, to the confusion of his foes and the delight of his friends.

A most enjoyable bit of irony is to be found in Judges 9:7-21. Abimelech, son of Jerubbaal, slew all of his brethren except Jotham, the youngest, who escaped by hiding. On the day that Abimelech was made king, Jotham stood on the top of Mount Gerizim, where he told this parable to the men of Shechem at its foot: The trees sought for a king to reign over them. They successively invited the olive tree, the fig tree, and the vine, but each declined because it was usefully engaged in fruit-bearing, and did not care for the empty honor of waving to and fro over the trees. At last they turned to the bramble—and it consented!